

# State of the City 2014

**advance**  
a strategic plan for **columbus**





**State of the City Address  
Presented April 15, 2014  
by the Honorable Mayor Kristen S. Brown  
at YES Cinema and Conference Center**



**Mayor**

Kristen S. Brown

**City Clerk-Treasurer**

Luann Welmer

**Columbus City Council**

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Ryan Brand, Second District

Frank Jerome, Third District

Frank Miller, Fourth District

Tim Shuffett, Fifth District

Jim Lienhoop, At Large

Kenny Whipker, At Large

**Board of Public Works and Safety**

Mayor Kristen S. Brown

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Jayne Farber

Robert Sullivan

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Jeff Bergman, Planning Director

Laurence Brown, MPO Director

Bryan Burton, City Garage Director

Matt Caldwell, Operations and Finance

Arlette Cooper-Tinsley, Human Resources

Elizabeth Fizel, City Engineer

Nicohl Birdwell-Goodin, Animal Care

Deborah Holt, Housing Authority Director

Jeff Logston, City Attorney and

Executive Director of Administration

Jason Maddix, Police Chief

Carl Malysz, Community Development

Brian Payne, Airport Director

Heather Pope, Redevelopment Director

Mike Pope, Facilities Manager

Keith Reeves, City Utilities Director

Cindy Setser, Transit Coordinator

Lorraine Smith, Human Rights Director

**Presentation of Colors**

Columbus Police & Fire Honor Guard

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Dylan Prather

**National Anthem**

Micaela McDowall

**Invocation**

Pastor Dan Wallace, First Christian Church

**Introduction of Mayor**

Dascal Bunch, City Council President

**State of the City Address**

Honorable Kristen S. Brown

**A special thank you to:**

YES Cinema staff for their cooperation in  
providing the venue;

Columbus Police and Fire Honor Guard;

Dylan Prather, Micaela McDowall,

Board of Public Works and Safety;

City Council;

and City employees

Contents



Introduction.....01

Advance Columbus.....03

Vision and Priorities.....05

Accomplishments.....07

    Quality Public Infrastructure.....07

    Safest Community.....09

    Healthy Community.....13

    Work Ready Community.....15

    Business-Friendly Community.....16

    Cultural and Creative Capital.....17

    Quality Housing Opportunities.....18

    Good Governance.....19

Financial Condition.....20

    City Revenues and Expenses.....20

    Employees.....21

    City Debt Service.....21

    City Cash Balances.....21

    Central TIF District.....22

    Deferred CAPEX.....22

Community Partnerships.....23

Thank you Council President Bunch. Welcome and thank you all for being here. I am honored to stand before you tonight as your mayor. Since assuming office just over 2 years ago, I have worked every day - to the very best of my ability - to humbly serve you, to lead a path of positive change and to advance our vision in ways that are consistent with our values.

To the City Council, other current elected and appointed officials and former elected officials, thank you for your presence here today and thank you for your public service.

To the citizens of Columbus who are here tonight, thank you for being here and thank you for all you do for our community.

Before I get started, I'd like to give a special thanks to our guests who opened the ceremony.

The Presentation of the Colors was performed by the Columbus Police and Fire Honor Guard comprised of: Police Officer John Thompson, Police Officer Julie Quesenbery, Firefighter Leroy Armstrong, Firefighter Bryan Bailey and Firefighter Chris Owens. Thanks gentleman and one lady for doing the honors.

And to Dylan Prather who led the Pledge of Allegiance. For his senior project, Dylan raised more than \$15,000 to help fund a third K-9 for the Columbus Police Department and we are very grateful to him. We now have the dog and he is currently in training with his handler Officer John Searle.

Thank you Dylan for a great job on the Pledge.

The national anthem was sung beautifully by Micaela McDowall. Micaela is a member of the Columbus North Choir. Thank you very much Micaela for an outstanding job.

And thank you to Pastor Dan Wallace from First Christian Church for delivering the invocation tonight and for all you

do for our community.

Our community is a special and remarkable combination of people and place. And as a result, the state of our city is strong! Our local economy is a powerhouse relative to the rest of the state and nation. World-renown architecture and public art are woven into the fabric of our daily lives. We benefit from exciting cultural and recreational amenities, a diverse population, a





strong sense of community and a culture of collaboration.

And last year was a high point - 2013 was an absolutely outstanding year for Columbus, Indiana!

Led by a revival in automotive manufacturing, our GDP grew nearly 10 percent, making Columbus the fifth fastest growing economy of the nation's nearly 400 metropolitan areas.

To fuel that growth, our employers have recently created thousands of jobs. Our job growth rate was tops in the state and 5<sup>th</sup> in the country. As a result, employment in Columbus hit an all-time high last year, eclipsing the previous record of more than 15 years.

Our largest employer, Cummins Inc., announced they

would figuratively and literally turbo-charge our economy even more by once again revving up the engine production lines at the Columbus Engine Plant (historically known as Plant One) and adding another 500 well-paying jobs to our community. Cummins' announcement was a resounding reaffirmation of Cummins' strong commitment to Columbus, Indiana.

Due to our economic prosperity, our population growth was number one in the state and second in the Midwest. Our population has recently grown at a faster rate than 93 percent of the country.

### **EXCELLENT QUALITY OF LIFE**

By the major measures, our quality of life in Columbus, Indiana is far better than in

the state and even the nation as a whole.

- Our per capita personal income is number one in the state and significantly greater than the nation's.
- Our unemployment rate is significantly lower than both the state's and nation's.
- Our poverty rate is significantly lower than both the state's and nation's.

- Our violent crime rate is the lowest in the state and lower than 90% of the nation.

Life is good in Columbus, Indiana. Relatively, life is phenomenal in Columbus, Indiana.

But the reality is a rising tide does not lift every boat. And we are not immune to the pervasive challenges of our time like: a widening skills gap



between the capabilities of our workforce and the needs of our employers, an unacceptable property crime rate, chronic poverty, unhealthy lifestyles and millions of dollars in deferred investment in aging infrastructure.

But we are Columbus. We aim even higher and have an unshakable confidence in our own ability to create an even more remarkable future.

### **ADVANCE COLUMBUS**

In order to do so, those of us at the City of Columbus are partnered with the other outstanding public and private organizations dedicated to serving our community. Together, we created “Advance Columbus,” a roadmap to solve our toughest challenges, leverage our great

strengths and capitalize on our many opportunities to advance our quality of life for today and for future generations.

Henry Ford, the great industrialist and pioneer of assembly line production said, “Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.”

### **ONE CITY. ONE PLAN.**

I rolled out Advance Columbus last year at the State of the City address. This community-wide strategic plan and process forms ***our shared vision*** and ***our shared values***. It provides a path to advance Columbus toward the future we envision in ways that are consistent with our values by ***defining our priorities*** and



***our goals*** which address every aspect of our quality of life. The goals are bold because when the stakes are high, Columbus rises to the occasion. Advance Columbus also defines ***our shared leadership***, the backbone of which are coalitions of public and private organizations serving the community. In the last year, these coalitions have made

great progress formulating tangible shared measures of success — because what gets measured gets done — and formulating shared initiatives to move the needle on those measures of success.

The end result is one plan created as a community for the community.



# ONE CITY. ONE PLAN.



**advance**  
a strategic plan for **columbus**

### VISION

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Our vision is

*To Be The Very Best  
Community Of Its  
Size In The Country.*

It is a bold and ambitious vision but we wouldn't have it any other way. How do we advance Columbus toward this future we envision?

We get there with direction and focus, ensuring we allocate our limited resources — our time, talent and treasure — toward our highest priorities.

### PRIORITIES

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Those priorities are:

#### 1. Advance Quality Infrastructure

Our infrastructure — our roads, airport, sanitary and storm sewer systems, water and power systems, as well as, our parks and parks facilities, comprise the basic fundamental physical fabric of our community. Our infrastructure is the critical foundation upon which everything else depends: our economy, our safety, our health and our welfare.

#### 2. Advance the Safety and Health of our Community

We are one of the safest communities in the country. However, when it comes to our personal safety and the protection of our property, there will always be room for improvement. A healthy community includes not only absence of disease and access to quality medical care, but also living healthy lifestyles and

living in an environmentally safe and responsible community.

#### 3. Advance Economic Prosperity And Well-Paying Jobs

Economic prosperity is another key driver of our quality of life because it increases wealth and living standards both collectively and individually.

Our exceptional economic statistics speak volumes about the relative strength of our economy and our business-friendly climate. However, There is still much work to be done to sustain and foster a diverse economy of well-paying jobs.

#### 4. To Advance opportunities for all.

Unfortunately, the good life

doesn't extend to everyone in our community, particularly those with low-incomes. Many don't earn enough to make ends meet. One in three households in our community cannot meet their basic needs, including quality housing, food security and health care and juggle financial obligations on a monthly basis.

All of these priorities are mutually reinforcing and create a virtuous circle.

At the City of Columbus, we're doing our part to Advance Columbus. Last year, we created the City government's first strategic plan and we did so by aligning our priorities and goals with the community's priorities and goals. In just one year's time, we've made considerable progress.



# OUR PRIORITIES



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## Accomplishments

State of the City 2014 | 7

Let's take a look at some of the progress by priority.

### QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE

*Invest in our critical public infrastructure, including parks facilities, to provide a strong foundation for our economy and quality of life.*

Our public infrastructure is the vital underpinning to our economic prosperity and the safety and health of all.

For years, Columbus has underinvested in maintaining our very most critical infrastructure – our roads – leading to a substantial deferred investment of approximately \$25

million.

Last year, we dramatically reversed this trend by completing the most significant road repaving project in the city's history. We invested \$4 million in rebuilding and repaving existing roads to restore more than 24 miles of crumbling streets. This investment represented more than the previous nine years combined of expenditures on our roads.

This year we are on track to beat last year's record by investing more than \$5 million into rebuilding and repaving our streets in most urgent need of repair.

Last year and this year we will also invest more than 12 million of local and federal dollars to completely reconstruct

three vital, highly trafficked residential collector streets, 200S, Carr Hill Road and Indiana Avenue. The work widens traffic lanes, adds storm sewers, bicycle lanes and sidewalks, making these streets significantly safer for motorists, school busses, bicyclists and pedestrians.

The Columbus City Utilities is responsible for the critical infrastructure that provides our drinking water and treats our

wastewater. Between our water and wastewater systems, we produce and treat billions of gallons of water and wastewater a year. The system consists of 3 large plants, hundreds of miles of piping and thousands of water meters and fire hydrants. These comprehensive and critical systems require vigilant maintenance and significant capital investment every year and 2013 was no exception.





Our airport infrastructure is vital to the personnel and cargo transportation needs of our largest employers. The annual economic impact of the Columbus Municipal Airport is a whopping \$650 million a year, making it the sixth top economic engine among the 69 airports in the state. Take the state's four international airports out of the equation, our airport is second only to Warsaw's in its economic contributions.

We are making significant investments in reconstructing the runways, renovating the terminal building, increasing hangar space, adding a self-fuel farm and other investments to grow the airport's operations.

We also provided half the funding for the Atterbury-Bakalar Air Museum expansion constructed last year and opened just days

ago. The museum importantly preserves the history of the airport as a former military air field and honors those who served in uniform to defend our freedoms.

Our outstanding public parks and facilities are also vital infrastructure for our health and quality of life. We run over 245 adult and youth programs annually and maintain and manage over 1,000 acres of land, 23 parks, multiple facilities comprising 250,000 square feet under roof, three



golf courses and several miles of people trails.

Last year and this year we've injected more than \$4 million to preserve and improve our existing parks and parks facilities, reversing years of deterioration and ensuring that today's and future generations can benefit from and enjoy these invaluable facilities.

These investments include:

- Over \$2.5 million to preserve and update Hamilton Center.
- Nearly \$600,000 in enhancements to Donner Center.
- And more than \$600,000 to significantly improve four neighborhood parks, transforming them into inviting, safe and accessible places for our kids to play.

We continue to expand our



People Trail network through a combination of federal transportation funds and generous private donations. Last year much of the groundwork was laid to begin work on much-anticipated, major trail connections this year.

### **SAFEST COMMUNITY**

#### *Be the safest city of our size in the country.*

Along with maintaining and improving our public infrastructure, public safety is job number one at the City of Columbus.

Last year, we took a major bite out of crime. We are preventing it by aggressively battling it on two fronts: choking off the supply of drugs in our community and proac-

tive community policing.

In 1971, President Richard Nixon declared that drug abuse was "public enemy number one". 43 years later in our own community drug abuse remains public enemy number one. Not only does drug abuse destroy the lives of the abuser, it is the root cause of most crimes, both violent and property crimes. Most burglaries and robberies are committed by addicts stealing property for cash to feed their habits.

Consequently, the battle against drugs in Columbus is raging. Last year, our police increased drug-related arrests by 37%.

Meth is the most vexing drug problem plaguing our community and our narcotics unit has

a lock on it. More than 40 percent of the drug cases we worked last year were meth-related. Our community continues to lead the state in meth lab busts.

Our crackdowns on pharmacy-hopping pill seekers yielded a decrease in prescription pill abuse. Unfortunately, some users turned to heroin. Last year, it hit us hard in the face in the form of dead bodies. Nine people in our community

died last year from heroin overdoses. We immediately began cracking down on heroin and our arrest rate shows it. The total number of heroin-dealing cases increased from 4 to 24 last year and we also took two main heroin dealers off the street.

These efforts continue to pay dividends. Just last month alone, we arrested five alleged drug dealers charged with dealing heroin, cocaine and





methamphetamine.

We dramatically accelerated our community policing efforts last year. All of our police officers now proactively patrol our most problematic neighborhoods. In 2013, these community policing patrols exceeded 18,000 — that's a 45% increase from the previous year. Never in the history of our police department have our men and women in blue been so proactive.

We also established a dedicated community policing unit in which a select group of officers do nothing but work to **prevent** crime rather than react to it. They partner with neighborhood watch groups to take their neighborhoods back from criminals. It's paid off by significantly reducing property crime and restoring stability to our hardest-hit neighborhoods.

Our community's tough stance on domestic violence is also

yielding results and we are seeing far fewer reports. For the first time in at least several years, the number of domestic violence calls dropped below 1,000 last year. That represents a significant 16% reduction from 2012.

Making our streets safer for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians is also a priority. Therefore we're cracking down on aggressive driving and drunk driving by dramatically step-

ping up our traffic enforcement.

Our police officers made over 10,000 more traffic stops in 2013 than 2012 — an increase of nearly 120%. This resulted in far fewer crashes on city streets, fewer accidents with bicyclists and pedestrians and zero fatalities.

Last year, we began a new partnership with Columbus Regional Health for ambulance



service. Our goal was to meet national standards by arriving on scene in 9 minutes or less 90% of the time. We greatly exceeded this goal with ambulances arriving on the scene in less than nine minutes 96% of the time! And we are receiving this improved service without the nearly \$1 million in annual tax subsidies of the past.

Our police officers and fire-

fighters are dispatched to every medical emergency in the city. The reason for this is our police officers and firefighters are almost always able to beat the ambulances on the scene and can begin immediate life-saving treatment of a victim.

Our police officers are trained in CPR and first aid. And last year we outfitted all of their vehicles with

automatic external defibrilators.

The investment has already paid off. Our police officers, on separate occasions, saved two lives last year by arriving first on the scene and deploying these devices on persons experiencing sudden cardiac arrest.

All 96 of our firefighters are trained as emergency medical technicians and 22

of them are paramedics capable of employing advanced life-saving techniques, such as administering drugs intravenously.

To ensure optimal victim survivability, we are currently training 11 more firefighters as paramedics, increasing our ranks by 50%. By September of this year, we will meet our goal of a paramedic firefighter staffed at all six fire sta-





tions 24 X 7, 365 days a year. This represents a significant advancement in our emergency medical services.

In June of last year, on the fifth anniversary of the 2008 flood that devastated our community, we unveiled our community's first-ever Comprehensive Flood Risk Management Plan.

This plan enables us to give you notice of flooding hours to days in advance and provides a response and evacuation plan to save lives and invaluable personal possessions. It is considered the best in the state and the model for other communities.

We've already trained four times in mock exercises and turned to this plan to guide us as we experienced

debilitating flooding last December. Never again will we be unprepared.

This winter was one of the worst on record for snow and frigid temperatures, but I am proud to say, thanks to the Snow Force, we overcame the fury of Old Man Winter.

This hardworking crew of snow plow operators was called out 20 times this

winter to battle twice the average snowfall, working extremely long hours to keep our streets clear of snow and safe for travel. I'm confident that we lead the state in our snow removal efforts.





## HEALTHY COMMUNITY

*Radically improve the health and wellness of our residents through healthy behaviors, healthy lifestyles and access to healthcare.*

Our community is committed to radically improving our overall health, not just access to healthcare but also healthy lifestyles and healthy behaviors.

In 2013 we knocked the ball out of the park with a healthy lifestyle initiative and public-private collaboration of extraordinary proportions.

We hosted the first-ever Mill Race Marathon, one of the largest and most successful marathon events in the state -- even in its inaugural year. More than 4,000 runners participated, more than 800 community volunteers helped and 15,000 people packed our downtown to celebrate.

While the race itself was organized and funded by



private sponsors, the marathon would not have been possible without the vital support services of the City of Columbus.

Our employees were the silent and invisible heroes who provided essential public safety services.

We shut down more streets at one time in our history and did so with minimal traffic disruption.

tions. We ran a unified command of more than 200 police officers from our own ranks and other law enforcement agencies, including SWAT members and bomb-sniffing K-9s. And our firefighters were on tap for emergency medical services.

The hard work and months of planning paid off, the race went off



without incident and was an overwhelming success. We're already well into the planning for this year's marathon which promises to be even more extraordinary.

Last year, the president of the United Way and I convened the first-ever Substance Abuse and Mental Health Coalition. We are not in denial about these vexing and chronic health issues. We realize we can only solve them as a community and the number of professionals from criminal justice, healthcare and social services coming to the table is impressive. We have much work ahead of us but we have begun to tackle head on the scourges of substance

abuse and mental disorders.

We not only strive to provide a safe and healthy community for humans, but we also work to create a safe and **healthy community** for our **animals**.

For the second year in a row, Animal Care Services has achieved a 100-percent adoption rate for



healthy dogs, eliminating the need for euthanasia due to space constraints at our shelter.

In fact, our adoptions of both dogs and cats were at an all-time high last year.

This would not have been possible without the help of our long-standing volunteer rescue partners.



Last year with started a partnership with another volunteer organization, CanINE Express. In 2013, CanINE Express transported more than 100 dogs, representing well over a third of our dog adoptions, to no-kill shelters in other areas of the country from where they were placed in permanent homes.



**WORK READY COMMUNITY**

*Close the skills gap so our employers are competitive and prosper and our employees have the skills to fill high-wage, high-demand jobs.*

The availability of skilled and talented employees is the single most important factor in our economic growth. However, the skills our employers require today are outpacing the skills of our workforce.

Our mandate is to produce a ready pipeline of skilled and job-ready workers, particularly those educated in science, technology, engineering and math, who can be immediately productive in the workplace.

Closing the skills gap is imperative to our future.

Therefore, our community has a laser-like focus on increasing the number of adults with 4 year degrees. Yet a bottleneck to increasing enrollment at our local colleges has been an absence of student housing.

The vice chancellor and dean of IUPUC described student housing as a game-changer to his recruitment efforts.

Last year we changed the game. We worked with the Federal Aviation Administration to allow student housing at the airport where our colleges are located. We then partnered with a seasoned private developer of student housing and signed a contract for a 114 bed, \$5 million housing complex for students on the airport property. Ground will break this fall and the facility will open next year.





## BUSINESS-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

*Provide the environment and resources that ensure our employers prosper and create good jobs in ways consistent with our values.*

We strive to be very business-friendly by providing the environment and resources that ensure our employers prosper and create good jobs.

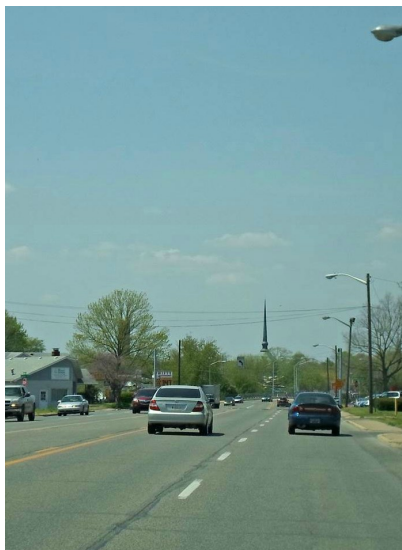
Last year, we provided tax incentives for industrial expansions that added more than 300 jobs and investments of over \$135 million.

Because of our job growth and

population growth, our city is literally bursting at the seams. Available land for future industrial and residential development is scarce at this point.

Job number one for us is to ensure availability of land and provide infrastructure to accommodate our growth in a way that minimizes our infrastructure investment and expansion of costly public safety services.

Our strategy to do so is four-fold.



1. We've identified and profiled properties that are vacant or undeveloped within Columbus and are encouraging developers to consider developing and in many cases, redeveloping blighted "infill sites."

2. To redevelop existing commercial areas. We recently completed the State Street Corridor Plan, in the hopes of revitalizing State Street and the surrounding neighborhoods.

3. We are planning the redevelopment of the 500 acres of the former Walesboro airport into an industrial park to provide shovel-ready industrial sites for continued job-creating growth.

4. We are also developing the city's first Strategic Growth Plan to accommodate and guide development in cost-efficient ways outside today's city limits, rather than reactively creating random and costly sprawl.



## CULTURAL AND CREATIVE CAPITAL

*Enrich the community with vibrant and diverse arts and cultural activities and assets that are affordable and appealing to all.*

Arts and cultural activities provide the kind of engaging at-

mosphere that attracts and retains talented people. The availability of talent is the single most important factor in local economic growth. And no economically strong region exists in the absence of a strong arts and cultural base.

We established the Columbus Arts District and finalized a vision and long-term plan to build on our existing cultural assets and programs.

Our arts district was awarded the official state designation as an Indiana Cultural District. We are one of only five communities to receive that honor.

We recently completed a comprehensive feasibility study for the renovation and repurposing of the historic Crump Theatre into a first-rate community performing arts facility. We hope the public will support

this initiative. The next public forum to review our options with the Crump is next week.

We are also exploring the redesign of the Mill Race Amphitheater in order to breathe new life into this facility so that it may accommodate significantly more outdoor community events.

While we carefully study





the future of these venues, we continue to introduce and grow community-wide arts events, including Live on the Plaza – a refreshed take on a free outdoor concert at our library plaza this summer – and expanding ArtFest into a weekend-long arts and artisan street festival with regional draw.

## QUALITY HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

*Ensure safe and affordable housing and attractive and proud neighborhoods for all.*

One of our top communitywide goals is to ensure safe and affordable housing in attractive and proud neighbor-

hoods for all.

The Columbus Housing Authority does an outstanding job of providing high-quality, affordable rental housing to roughly 750 economically-disadvantaged families in our community. We do so through a combination of providing public housing and administering a large rental assistance program. We couple housing with several self-sufficiency services that ena-

ble those we serve to ultimately achieve personal economic independence.

With the help of the Mayor's Advisory Council on Safe and Affordable Housing we are working to eliminate homelessness, ensure the availability of more high-quality affordable housing and eliminate the blight from neighborhoods throughout our community.

Last year, we completed a





housing needs assessment which identifies and quantifies the root causes for the gaps in housing supply and demand for residents of all income levels, life stages and abilities.

It is serving as the basis for a comprehensive housing strategy aimed at increasing the development of quality housing across the spectrum, as well as, redeveloping substandard housing.

The site of the Golden Castings foundry, a decade-long eyesore in the heart of our city, is finally starting to see new life thanks to our community development efforts. Remediation and redevelopment is expected to start this year, with the development of much-needed additional high-quality, affordable housing.

We began making our most troubled neighborhood stronger and prouder with concentrated code enforcement and community policing, infrastructure and parks improvements and neighborhood cleanups.

We made the most significant progress in our most distressed neighborhood around 9<sup>th</sup> Street Park.

A year and a half ago, residents of this neighborhood told us they felt unsafe outside their homes and that our park had become a magnet for anti-social behavior and criminal activity, particularly drug-related issues. This was unacceptable. We acted and we've significantly improved the safety and appearance of the park and neighborhood and we stay committed to continuing the progress.

## GOOD GOVERNANCE

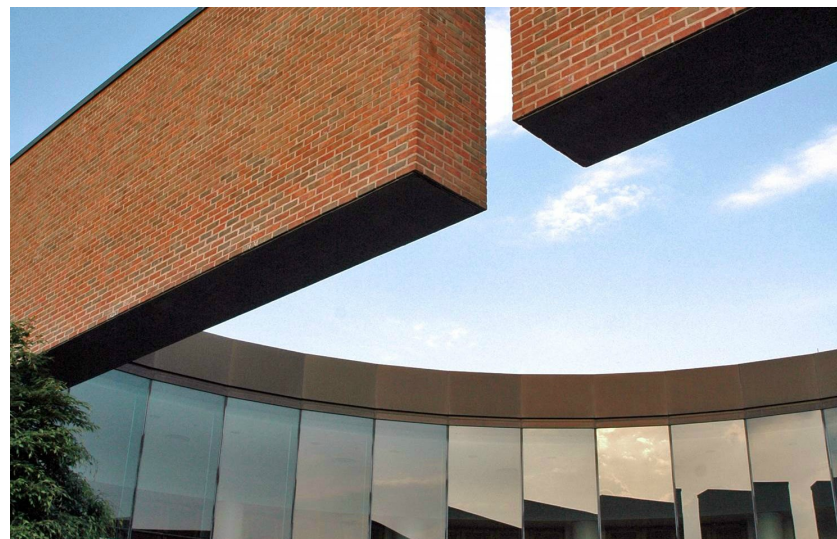
*To be the most open, responsive, efficient and equitable government of our size and the model of good government.*

Those are just the highlights of what we've been doing to Advance Columbus. How we ac-

complish these things is every bit as important as what we do.

To that end, we have a goal of being the model of good government – the most honest, open, responsive, accountable and fiscally-responsible municipal government of our size. And we're delivering.

Last year, we disbanded the City's private corporation, Columbus Downtown Inc., and



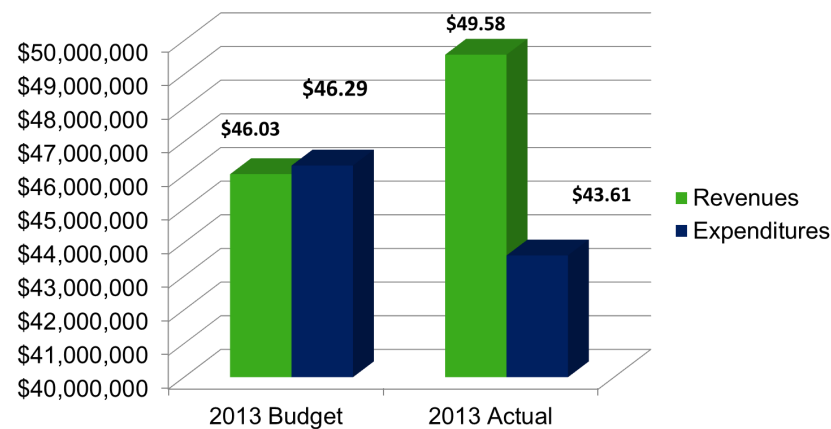
stopped spending taxpayer money behind closed doors.

We dramatically improved our transparency, accessibility and accountability with live video streaming and recording of public meetings online. This service has attracted thousands of viewers who otherwise would not experience their government in action.

We adopted a comprehensive code of ethical conduct for all officials and employees, including sensible limits on gifts, con-

flicts of interest, patronage and nepotism. This gives you assurance that we are operating in your best interest — not in our personal interests or in favor of special interests.

We improved service last year by launching uReport, an online customer service request application that gives you the opportunity to quickly and easily request city services such as filling potholes, 24x7, every day of the year. We've received and fulfilled hundreds of your requests over the past year.



## CITY REVENUES AND EXPENSES

And we are being extremely fiscally responsible.

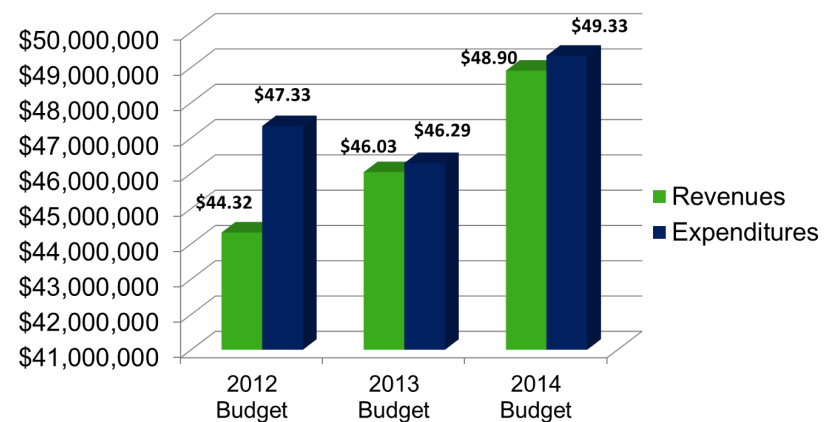
Immediately upon taking office, we made it a priority to reduce overall spending to find savings sufficient to repeal the unpopular trash fee. We were able to accomplish this task and we repealed the trash fee on April 17, 2012. This meant last year's budgeted expenditures were \$1.5 million dollars less than they would have been.

Even so, we spent \$3 million less than budget.

This reduction combined with better than expected revenue of more than \$3 million means we finished last year with a \$6 million surplus.

This year, the budget is \$49.3 million - an increase of \$3 million from last year.

This increase can be attributed to a much needed increase in capital maintenance expenditures which have been underfunded for many



years, as well as, the very sizable investment in the reconstruction of Indiana Avenue in East Columbus – a part of the city long overdue for infrastructure improvements.

Even still, we decreased our tax rate this year.

I'd also like to note that these numbers do not reflect our \$14 million utilities budget and our \$3 million Housing Authority budget – neither of which are funded by local tax dollars. The spending of those operations remains basically flat year over year.

### EMPLOYEES

Our headcount across all operations has remained flat since we took office even

with the addition of 2 police officers this year as school resource officers.

We have 437 full-time employees and 195 part-time and seasonal employees.

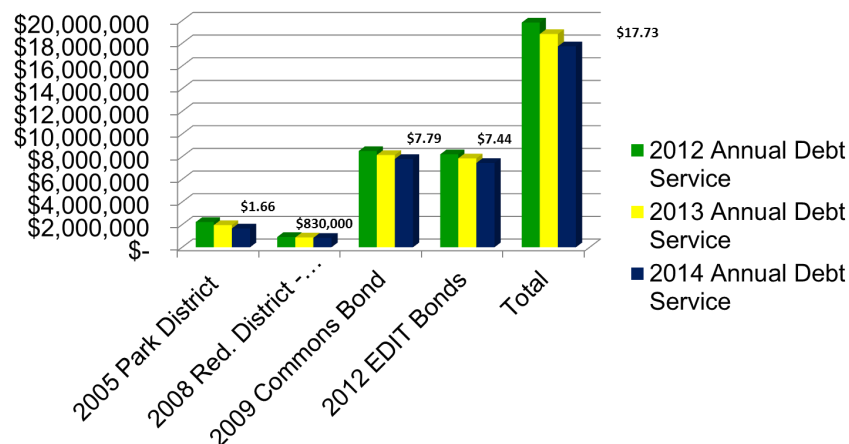
### CITY DEBT SERVICE

The City's outstanding debt is decreasing year over year. We've issued no incremental new debt since we took office just over two years ago. Our Standard and Poor's rating is still a very strong AA-.

### CITY CASH BALANCES

We improved our overall cash balances at the end of last year, including a \$3.5 million increase in the cash reserves of our main operating fund, the general fund.

## City Debt Service



	2013 Full Time	2013 Part Time	2014 Full Time	2014 Part Time
Fire Department	96		98	
Police	88		88	
Utilities	66		66	
Parks	53	172	52	172
City Garage	49	5	49	5
Transit	16	9	16	11
Administration	15		15	
Housing Authority	15		15	
Planning	8		7	1
Animal Care	6		6	2
Clerk-Treasurer	6		6	
Engineering	6		6	
Aviation	4	4	5	3
Community Development	3	1	3	1
Human Rights	3		3	
Metro Planning	1		1	
Redevelopment	1		1	
Technology Advisory	1		1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>195</b>



### CENTRAL TIF DISTRICT

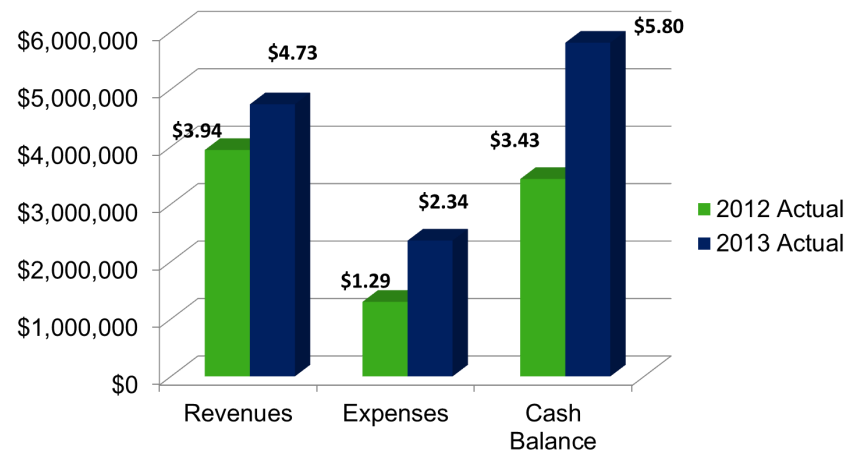
Last year, we operated well in the black in our TIF District, growing our cash reserves to a healthy \$5.8 million. This gives us the ability to fund future improvements we are currently planning to our industrial park and arts district.

assessed our deferred capital expenditures which totaled \$35 million and developed a 5 year capital plan to catch up on these deferred expenditures and start keeping pace with our annual needs.

Last year, we spent a total of \$12 million dollars in capital to address our most urgent deferred needs.

This year we will continue to close the gap by spending an-

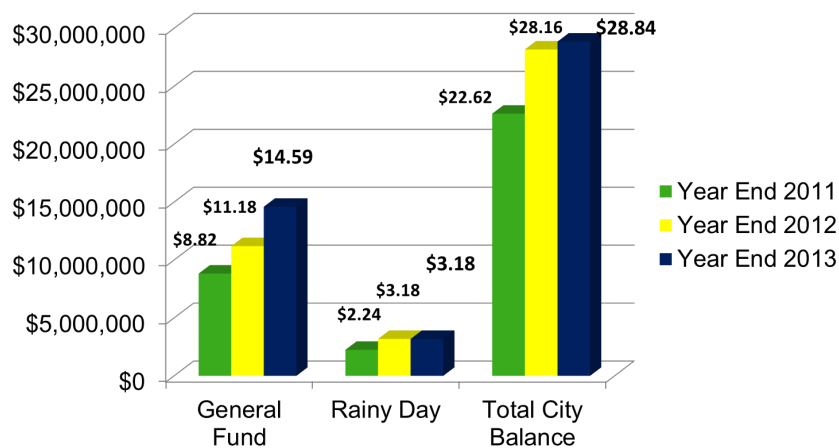
### Central TIF District



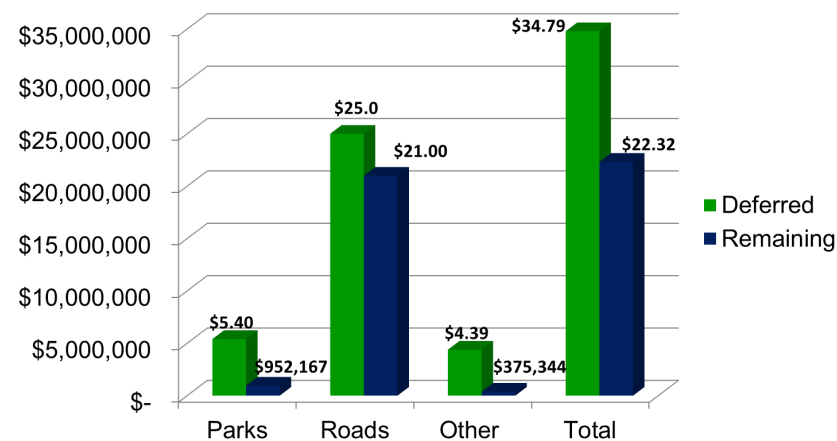
### DEFERRED CAPEX

Just after assuming office, we

### City Cash Balances



### Deferred CAPEX



other \$6.5 million dollars just to address deferred needs.

I'll summarize the City's financial condition by saying it is the strongest it's been in years. We're finding efficiencies and spending your money more wisely and we're responsibly addressing our deferred capital needs.

### EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION

The City employees have made all of this outstanding progress in addition to their day-in and day-out duties of fighting fires, running quality parks programs, collecting your trash, patching potholes, and providing many other vital community services we tend to take for granted.

As a sign of appreciation for our talented and hard-working employees, please join me in an

enthusiastic round of applause for them!

### OUR PARTNERSHIPS

Columbus has a history of collaboration among community stakeholders. This practice of using public private partnerships to share accountability is integral to our success moving forward.

Each goal of Advance Columbus has been assigned a public private coalition comprised of the leaders of the relevant organizations.

Where a coalition didn't exist, we've created it. **With each coalition**, community members are also engaged as substantive partners. Ultimately you are the owners and drivers of our plan.

We have two tremendous

models of success to look to for guidance and inspiration – the Community Education Coalition and the Healthy Communities Council.

Like those coalitions, each new coalition has developed shared objectives and are formulating measures of success and joint initiatives to move the needle on those measures.

Reaching our goals will not be easy. It will take time. But we

can do it. And we are already well on our way.

We are all — the entire community — entrusted with an opportunity and, indeed, an obligation to advance Columbus. To leave our city a better place than we found it – a more prosperous city, a safer city, a healthier city, and a city of opportunities for all.

This is an exciting time: a time of renewal and change, of tough



challenges and promising opportunities.

I pledge to do my part to tackle these challenges and capitalize on these opportunities with unmatched enthusiasm, fueled by your confidence and trust.

But we will only be successful if we all — elected officials, community leaders, businesses, people of Columbus — are engaged and working together as a community.

We can do it. We are Columbus. We are confident in who we are and we are optimistic in what we can be. We believe in ourselves and in our ability... We CAN become the very best community of its size in the country.

Let's make it happen together!

May God bless each of you and may He continue to bless our great city. Thank you.





## Our People

The privilege to lead comes from our people and success is measured by our engagement of and service to all.

To be the very best community of its size in the country.

Excellence  
Our People  
Collaboration  
Design  
Service  
Community

**advance**  
a strategic plan for **columbus**

## Our Priorities

Advance Economic Prosperity and Well-Paying Jobs

Advance the Safety and Health of Our Community

Advance Opportunities for All

## Our Goals

● Work Ready Community

● Business Friendly Community

● Cultural and Creative Capital

● Welcoming Community

● Safest Community

● Healthy Community

● Environmentally Responsible Community

● Lifelong Learning

● Quality Housing Opportunities

● Positive Youth Development

● Financial Stability

## Our Partnerships

● Community Education Coalition

● CAEGC

● Columbus Arts District Coalition

● Welcoming Community Coalition

● Public Safety Coalition

● Healthy Communities Council

● Environmental Coalition

● Community Education Coalition

● Mayor's Advisory Council on Housing

● Council for Youth Development

● Financial Stability Coalition

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